

general practitioner interested in doing the briefest neurological examination consistent with a reasonable degree of thoroughness. It by no means takes the place of one of the short treatises on neurological examination already available. It does, however, make very interesting reading for the neurologist, particularly if he is acquainted with the author, who is able to inject much of his personality into the text.

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THE LIVING BRAIN. W. Grey Walter. W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1953. 311 pages, \$3.95.

Here is a book that should be read by every physician. Ostensibly written for the layman, it is not easy reading even for one trained in neurophysiology; yet the content is such as to make it very worthwhile reading. The author has been a pioneer in the field of electroencephalography, to which he brought the viewpoint of the physical scientist rather than the physiologist. The present work is an example of how much the physical sciences have contributed to the production of a theory of mental processes which, although far from complete, at least has a basis understandable without recourse to things metaphysical. The book comprises a consideration of the evolution of the nervous system, and an effort to explain, on a basis of Pavlov's elucidation of the conditioned reflex and knowledge gained from electrophysiology and electronics, how the human brain works as a thinking machine. How well the author has succeeded in this task must be left to the reader; the attempt, however, is provocative and worthy of thought. It is possible that the lay reader could sit down and read the book through in an evening as an interesting variant from science fiction; to one versed in the field of electrophysiology it contains an ample ration for an extended period.

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SYMPATHETIC CONTROL OF HUMAN BLOOD VESSELS. H. Barcroft, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., Professor of Physiology, St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, formerly Dunville Professor of Physiology, Queens' University, Belfast; and H. J. C. Swan, Ph.D., M.B., B.S., F.R.C.P., formerly Lecturer in Physiology, St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, Research Associate, Mayo Foundation. Distributed by Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, for Edward Arnold & Co., London, 1953. 165 pages, \$3.75.

This small volume summarizes clearly the modern concepts of sympathetic control of blood vessels. Most of the work on which it is based was performed by its authors on human subjects, with current techniques and the classical understanding of British physiologists at their best. Chapters on noradrenaline, adrenergic blockade, pheochromocytoma, and vasovagal fainting deserve special mention; there is an appendix on plethysmography. The work is highly recommended.

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HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SIGHT—Simple Daily Drills in Relaxation—Revised Edition. Margaret Darst Corbett (authorized Instructor of the Bates Method). Crown Publishers, Inc., 419 Fourth Ave., New York, 1953. 93 pages, \$1.50.

This book is a revised edition of instructions on use of the Bates Method of correction of "eye troubles" by "scientific relaxation." It is divided into 15 chapters, each averaging five pages. The author conducts the School of Eye Education for which the book is the standard text. On the inside of the dust cover it is said that, "The sight-improvement of Dr. William H. Bates was once considered revolutionary: Today it is the one irrefutable, simple, scientific yet commonsense theory known throughout the world."

The book contains many statements that cannot be subscribed to on the basis of modern scientific ophthalmology.

For example: "The extrinsic muscles, not the lens, used correctly, make accommodation." Again: "Serious conditions of the eye, formerly considered hopeless, such as atrophy, glaucoma, cataract, sympathetic ophthalmia and even detachment and hemorrhage, may often be improved by relaxation, if there is any vision left at all with which to work and if the method is practiced a sufficient length of time."

A great deal of emphasis has been placed on the value of the Bates Method in the treatment of myopia. Two extensive series have been studied in this country, one at Washington University and the other at the Wilmer Institute of Johns Hopkins. The conclusions of both were similar, and can best be summarized by quoting the last sentence of the Wilmer report which was based on a study of 103 patients given a course of visual training by a group of optometrists and psychologists:

"With the possible exception of educating some patients to interpret blurred retinal images more carefully and of convincing some others they could see better even though there was no actual improvement, this study indicates that the visual training used on these patients was of no value for the treatment of myopia."

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DERMATOLOGY IN GENERAL PRACTICE. Jacob Hyams Swartz, M.D., Assistant Professor of Dermatology, Harvard Medical School. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1953. 581 pages, \$11.00.

This volume can be highly recommended for the general physician. It has certain features which he will find very helpful. The most important is the topographical arrangement under which he can refer to a certain area of the body and find out which dermatoses most frequently occur there; for example, erythema nodosum on the shins. Another valued item consists of specific instructions for applying methods of treatment; for example, the way to give a carbolic shampoo for head lice. The book is full of such valuable everyday details.

The photographs are, in general, good but could be made much more instructive if they were in color. The chapter on the exanthemata is too brief and devoid of photographs. The chapter on syphilis is brief but is well illustrated and gives sound advice on therapy.

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THE CIBA COLLECTION OF MEDICAL ILLUSTRATIONS—Volume 1—Nervous System. Frank H. Netter, M.D., commissioned and published by the Ciba Pharmaceutical Products, Inc., Summit, N. J., 1953. 143 pages, 104 full-color paintings, sold at cost, \$6.00.

The material in this volume has already come in serial form to the office of most physicians as part of the advertising policy of the pharmaceutical company publishing it. Dr. Netter's drawings pertaining to the nervous system are now assembled, together with the text composed by outstanding authorities.

This book is directed to the clinician whose interest and contact with matters neurological is occasional, and who therefore may require some ready neuroanatomic reference to help in the general localization of central nervous system lesions, or to remind him of the fundamental characteristics of some of the more common of these diseases.

The artist has stated his intent to avoid "minute details and controversial theories," and "to compress" in these drawings "the most important and clinically useful facts" pertaining to the anatomy and, to a less degree, the physiology of the nervous system. The details have been eliminated as planned, and considerable information of clinical value may be obtained from the work of the artist and his